

both against their overlord and their subjects all the insolent pride, the cruelty, the untamable temper of their race. One of the historians of Roger's reign justifies him by a picture of the confusion then reigning in Lower Italy which is probably not exaggerated¹:

The ducal towns like Salerno, Troia, Melfi, Venosa, deprived of their lord and duke, this man or that with tyrant force wrenched away for himself. Every one did what pleased him, for no one made any protest. No one was afraid of being punished in this life, and so, one after the other, they gave their unbridled lust to evil deeds. Travellers were kept perpetually in the greatest misery; even the peasants did not feel safe if they ventured outside their own fields. In short if God had not kept alive a sprig of the stem of Guiscard who quickly seized the reins of the ducal power, the whole land had perished in accursed abomination of inhuman cruelty.

It was Roger's aim from the first to unite all the Norman acquisitions of the past century into a single state. For that purpose, he gradually pushed home every claim which had any shadow of right in it. To Sicily and Calabria, he now added Apulia-Salerno, with the latter duchy he acquired its claims on Amalfi, Ban, and

every
dependency, whether now subject or
free. He
assumed that adventurers who had
carried the
frontier of conquest to the Pescara and
Chieti had

* Al. Tel, bk. i., ch. i.